

Georgia DOT Bridge No. 233-00001D-00648N
U.S. 27/State Route 1
Cedartown Vicinity
Polk County
Georgia

HAER No. GA-96

HAER
GA
117-CEDAR.V,
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
National Park Service
Southeast Region
Department of the Interior
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

Georgia DOT Bridge No. 233-00001D-00648N

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Location: U.S. 27/State Route 1 spanning Cedar Creek 2.2 miles south of Cedartown, Polk County, Georgia

U.S.G.S. Benedict Quadrangle (7.5), Zone 16
Universal Transverse Mercator
Coordinates:

<u>Northing</u>	<u>Easting</u>
3761120	660980

Date of Construction: 1922. Altered 1935.

Engineers/Builder: Designed and constructed by the State Highway Department, Bridge Office.

Present Owner: Georgia Department of Transportation
2 Capitol Square, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Present Use: Vehicular bridge to be demolished 1997.

Significance: Georgia DOT Bridge No. 233-00001D-00648N is a reinforced concrete arch type bridge that was constructed in 1922. Originally constructed with an 18 foot wide roadway, the bridge roadway was widened to 24 feet in 1935 with an in-kind addition to the east side. This bridge is one of only 34 early examples of concrete arch type bridges still extant in the state, and the only remaining one of its kind in Polk County. It is significant for its design and workmanship, and for its role in the development of transportation and commerce in Polk County.

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Date: May 1997

Georgia DOT Bridge No. 233-00001D-00648N is a two-span, reinforced concrete arch type bridge characterized by concrete balustrades with flared end posts, bushammer finished spandrel walls, a bull-nosed pier with pilasters, and concrete abutments with wingwalls. The bridge originally was constructed in 1922, and had a deck with a roadway width of 18 feet. In 1935, the bridge deck was widened to 24 feet with an in-kind addition to the east side. The addition was finished with the same balustrades and architectural details as the original bridge.

Georgia DOT Bridge No. 233-00001D-00648N is located on U.S. 27/State Route 1 spanning Cedar Creek 2.2 miles south of Cedartown, Georgia, the county seat of Polk County. U.S. 27/State Route 1 is a two lane roadway that runs the length of the state from the Tennessee State line to the Florida State line. It is sited near the western border of Georgia, and is presently being widened to a four lane divided highway as part of Georgia's economic development system.

The section of U.S. 27/State Route 1 in the area of Georgia DOT Bridge No. 233-00001D-00648N has historically been known as the Benedict community. The community received its name from members of the Benedict Family who settled in the area and established a prestigious private school in 1895 northwest of Cedar Creek known as the Samuel Benedict Memorial School (1). During that same year, a c. 1850 grist mill located on the northeast bank of Cedar Creek also was purchased by the founders of the Samuel Benedict Memorial School, and became known as Benedict Mill (2). Several residences dating to the early part of the twentieth century were part of the original setting of the bridge, as well. Today, the area surrounding Georgia DOT Bridge No. 233-00001D-00648N includes remnants of the original setting, such as Benedict Mill and a c. 1900 residence. However, given its proximity to Cedartown, the area also is presently characterized by a fairly dense amount of non-historic commercial and residential development.

With the enactment of the Federal Aid Road Act in 1916, Georgia established its state highway department, and incorporated several roads into the new State system (3). U.S. 27/State Route 1 was one of these roads. Among the early objectives of the State Highway Department were to improve the quality and quantity of roads throughout the State, and to provide safer and permanent crossings over the State's many rivers and creeks. In the early 1920s, the section of U.S. 27/State Route 1 that ran through Polk county was improved with a sand-clay road surface, and in 1922, Georgia DOT Bridge No. 233-00001D-00648N was constructed (4). When hard-surfacing

of the section of U.S. 27/State Route 1 that ran south from Cedartown was undertaken during the mid-1930s, Georgia DOT Bridge No. 233-00001D-00648N was widened to accommodate the improved roadway (5).

Georgia DOT Bridge No. 233-00001D-00648N is one of Georgia's few remaining examples of concrete bridges that represent the State's early efforts at constructing permanent bridges. Although steel had been the prevailing material utilized in the construction of bridges during the latter part of the nineteenth century, concrete readily became the most popular material for the construction of the State's new bridges in the twentieth century due to its strength and durability. Between 1919 and 1922, the Georgia Highway Department constructed 255 new bridges throughout the State, 85 percent of which were of concrete construction (6). This bridge presently is one of only 34 concrete arch type bridges constructed prior to 1941 that remains standing in the State, and the only remaining one of its kind in Polk County (7). Although the type and method of construction exemplified by Georgia DOT Bridge No. 233-00001D-00648N is no longer utilized, concrete bridges revolutionized bridge building throughout the State for decades to come.

Endnotes:

- 1) Banner, Elizabeth Young. Unpublished manuscript on the history of the Benedict School. Polk County Public Library, Cedartown, Georgia, 1970.
- 2) Ibid.
- 3) Georgia Department of Transportation and Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Bridge Survey, 1981, p. 28.
- 4) Lichtenstein and Associates. Historic Bridge Inventory Update. "Historic Contexts: Bridge Building Technology in Georgia." Unpublished manuscript on file with the Georgia Department of Transportation's Office of Environment/Location, Atlanta, Georgia, 1997.
- 5) Ibid.
- 6) State Highway Board of Georgia, Fourth Annual Report of the State Highway Board of Georgia, 1922, p. 76.
- 7) Lichtenstein and Associates. Historic Bridge Inventory Update. "Historic Contexts: Bridge Building Technology in Georgia." Unpublished manuscript on file with the Georgia Department of Transportation's Office of Environment/Location, Atlanta, Georgia, 1997.